



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*** NEWS RELEASE ***

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2008 Wisconsin Middle Schools of Excellence named

Schools in Bloomer, Colby, Medford, and Sussex receive first-ever awards

MADISON—Elizabeth Burmaster, state superintendent of public instruction, and Thomas Beattie, executive director for the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators (AWSA), announced Wisconsin's first Middle School of Excellence awards.

The four schools, chosen from among 90 Exemplary Middle Schools identified last year through academic achievement criteria, are

- Large: Templeton Middle School — Principal: Patricia Polczynski (Hamilton School District in Sussex);
- Medium: Medford Middle School — Principal: Al Leonard;
- Small: Bloomer Middle School — Principal: Barry Kamrath; and
- High Poverty: Colby Middle School — Principal: Nancy Marcott.

A panel of judges, which included middle school principals and a representative from the Department of Public Instruction, judged applications. They examined the schools' efforts and accomplishments in the areas of collaborative leadership and professional learning communities; personalization and the school environment; and curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Schools were invited to apply for a Middle School of Excellence award by being within the top 10 percent of all schools in reading and mathematics achievement on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations, having significant gains in reading or mathematics scores during the past year, or having high growth in reading or mathematics achievement in schools of high poverty.

"These four middle schools have embraced our New Wisconsin Promise: to ensure a quality education for every child," Burmaster said. "The success they create in middle school builds on the foundation for future success in high school and beyond."

(more)

“Middle school is a transitional time that can challenge parents and teachers. The leaders in these schools have established successful learning communities that nurture their students,” Beattie said. “The 2008 Middle Schools of Excellence are models for other schools to look to for strategies that support students and their academic achievement.”

Representatives from the four award winning schools will be recognized and presented with a gift at the awards luncheon during the AWSA Middle School Principals Conference at 11:30 a.m., Feb. 14, 2008, at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Stevens Point.

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NOTE: This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_18.pdf.